

Town of Hampton
Board of Finance
Regular Meeting
June 12, 2018
7:00 pm
Hampton Town Hall Community Room

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 7:01 p.m.

Members/Alternates Present: Jeff Clermont, Ed Adelman, Nick Brown, Mike Higgins, Rick Matejka, Perry Matchinis, Dave Fowler, Kathy Donahue, Stan Crawford.

Staff and Others Present: First Selectman Al Cahill, Selectmen Bob Grindle and Mike Chapel, Treasurer Ellen Rodriguez, Recording Clerk Dayna McDermott-Arriola, Hampton Elementary School Board of Education Chairman Rose Bisson and Board of Education members Anne Gruenberg, Mary Ellen Donnelly, Susan Lovegreen and Mark Becker.

Citizen Comments:

Lisa Sanchez questioned whether State and Federal guidelines were followed in the processes employed for the Fire Department's building project, specifically if the Board of Finance expected the project to be put to bid, and if the position of Clerk of the Works to oversee the project has been advertised. Chairman Clermont explained that Deputy Fire Chief Noel Waite presented the plans to the finance board, including the selection of a familiar construction company, traditionally the lowest bidder. Though finance board members discussed concerns over single source procurement for the project, objections were raised after the Fire Department expended funds and locked in costs for materials. Mike Higgins explained the difference between "design and build" projects and those which utilize a general contractor and that, according to the Town Auditor and Attorney, there were neither State or Federal rules, nor Town ordinances, which applied to this project; however he recommended that procedures be established. Kathy Donahue, citing the approved Minutes of the April 24 meeting which stipulated "that multiple bids should be sought prior to awarding construction projects," agreed that the finance board develop an ordinance for future construction projects, as did other board members. First Selectman Al Cahill stated that he would advertise for a Clerk of the Works for the project, which could be a paid or volunteer position.

Mark Becker asked if a similar process would be applied for financing repair of the school parking lot. Perry Matchinis confirmed that it would be, except that the school could also apply funds from its Capital and Non-recurring Account toward the project.

Approval of Minutes:

Motion: Ed Adelman, seconded by Perry Matchinis, to approve the May 8, 2018 Regular Meeting Minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion: Nick Brown, seconded by Rick Matejka, to approve the May 8, 2018 Public Hearing Minutes with the following amendment under Presentation of Plan and Funding for the Addition to the Fire House: "Deputy Chief Waite explained that the Fire Department selected a "design and build" company with which *he* shared a positive history from multiple past projects." Motion carried unanimously.

Motion: Ed Adelman, seconded by Jeff Clermont, to approve the May 29, 2018 Special Meeting Minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

Presentations: none.

Reports/Actions

First Selectman: First Selectman Cahill reported that the Fire Department signed the contract with the construction company, which includes a Clerk of the Works, a position that could be filled voluntarily by a Town Official or the Building Inspector. He also reported that the State reimbursed the Town with

LOCIP funds amounting to \$52,000 for improvements to Parker Road, and that contracts have been awarded for repaving Kenyon Road and Windy Hill. The Selectmen are developing a 5-Year Plan to include the removal of trees considered hazardous; collaboration with area towns is a possibility. Nick Brown asked if the Town anticipates further funds from the State for this fiscal year. Treasurer Rodriguez replied that \$94,000 remained outstanding, as well as \$54,000 in Municipal Revenue Sharing.

Tax Collector: Chairman Clermont reviewed the Report of the Tax Collector, which reported deposits for the month of May of \$4,725.04 in cash, \$11,909.41 in checks, and \$4,199.38 in online payments, for a total of \$20,702.91. Year to date the Town has deposited \$3,802,416.53 and received \$152,367.78 in online payments for a total of \$3,984,118.19. Bounced checks totaling \$4,471.19 and refunds in the amount of \$5,900.94, leave a net collection of \$3,973,746.06.

Motion: Nick Brown, seconded by Rick Matejka, to accept the Tax Collector's Report. Motion carried unanimously.

The Tax Collector also informed the finance board of the Dairy Farm Abatement, which requires approval from the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Finance.

Motion: Nick Brown, seconded by Perry Matchinis, to approve the Dairy Farm Abatement. Motion carried unanimously.

Treasurer: Ellen Rodriguez requested several transfers and reported that the nine month Certificate of Deposit matured and that interest rates currently range from 2.06% for six and nine month CDs and 2.16% for 12 month CDs.

Motion: Perry Matchinis, seconded by Mike Higgins, to renew the Certificate of Deposit, and its accrued interest, for six months. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion: Ed Adelman, seconded by Mike Higgins, to approve the following transfers: \$50 from Assessor Clerk 6006-02 to Assessor Professional 6006-05; \$50 from P&Z Training 6010-06 to P&Z Legal Notices 6010-02; \$600 from Auditor 6012-00 to Board of Finance Administration 6012-01; \$500 from Diesel 6201-05 to Town Garage Maintenance 6201-07; \$1000 from Diesel 6201-05 to Tree Removal 6208; \$1200 from Contingencies 7000 to Town Hall Maintenance. 6007-03. Motion carried unanimously.

Board of Education:

Chairman Bisson distributed the "Draft Minimum Budget Requirement for 2018-2019" prepared by the school's Business Coordinator which was based on discussions with the State Department of Education and illustrated two methods of reaching the MBR: to appropriate an amount level with last year; or to consider student enrollment in the elementary and middle/high school, which, due to the decrease in the Town's assessment for District#11, would require the elementary school to appropriate an additional \$63,478 to remain in compliance with the MBR. Kathy Donahue requested the documentation from the State Department. Chairman Bisson stated that the Board has not met to discuss the budget since its defeat at the May 29 referendum, but the Superintendent's suggestion is to return the same proposal to the Town as the budget cannot be reduced below the MBR without penalty.

While Ed Adelman voiced support for the decisions of school officials, Perry Matchinis reminded members of the finance board's right to make line item recommendations. He suggested that voters were less disturbed by the amount budgeted than the way the money would be spent, particularly the proposal to fund a part time Business Manager. Kathy Donahue noted that residents at the Annual Town Meeting expressed concern over funding an additional layer of administration, noting that the school's per pupil cost for administration at \$1,765 is approximately \$700 more than schools in our District Reference Group and the state average of \$1000. In response to her statement that the administration provides sufficient financial oversight through the Business Coordinator, the Principal, and the Superintendent, Chairman Bisson stated that the Principal and the Superintendent were unable to provide necessary oversight and to access financial materials. She listed the Business Manager's three objectives: to

generate income through grants; to increase efficiencies; to provide a broader perspective of finances. In response to First Selectman Cahill's question regarding the availability of the Business Manager at meetings of the Boards of Finance and Education, Chairman Bisson stated that would be included in the agreement. Stan Crawford suggested that the \$17,000 slated for the Business Manager be removed from the Business Coordinator's salary.

Kathy Donahue also stated that people expressed concern over the elimination of the school's reading teacher; Chairman Bisson stated that the administration decided there was no need for a reading teacher, and Mary Ellen Donnelly explained the methods of delivering reading instruction.

Perry Matchinis noted that when the student count declines, staffing should decrease accordingly, and asked for information on grade configurations, enrollment, class size, staffing, and the number of paraprofessionals assigned to students and classrooms. Kathy Donahue reminded members that a budget package containing this information is usually distributed, instead of the document the finance board received.

The subject of transportation was also addressed by Kathy Donahue and Perry Matchinis, in terms of the need for three buses, and the method of budgeting. Currently, the elementary school carries the transportation costs for the middle/high school as well.

Board member Anne Gruenberg thanked the finance board for their deliberations, but urged members to support the budget once it was approved, noting that their public opinions impact the community.

Board of Finance Committees:

HR Committee: none.

Fiscal Policy and Procedures Committee: none.

Correspondence: none.

Old Business

Discuss and Act on 2018-2019 Hampton Elementary School Budget

The item will be added to the next Agenda after the Board of Education has met and adopted its proposal.

Citizen Comment:

Shannon Haddad stated that the elementary school parking lot is frequently used by the community for town events and its repair should therefore be funded by the municipal budget. She also reminded the Board of Finance that the members of the Board of Education, as educators and professionals, are the experts on the needs of the elementary school.

Suggestions for Next Agenda:

Re-appoint the Fiscal Policy and Procedures Committee

Discuss Ordinance to Address Procedures for Construction Projects

Appoint Clerk of the Works for Fire Department Project

Appoint Representative to the Hampton Elementary School Contract Negotiation Team

Discuss and Act on Elementary School Budget

Date, Time and Place of Next Meeting:

Regular Meeting on July 10, 2018 at 7 p.m. in the Lower Level of Town Hall.

Public Hearing for Elementary School Budget on July 10, 2018 at 7:30 p.m. in the Lower Level of Town Hall.

Adjournment:

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 8:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dayna McDermott Arriola
Recording Clerk

This is a draft version of the Minutes until approved by the Board of Finance.

